

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
PRODUCT/SERVICE DESCRIPTION DOCUMENT (PDD)
TYPE: Official Product
DATE: April 30, 2003***

OPEN LAKES FORECAST

Part 1 - Mission Connection

1. Product/Service Description:

The Open Lake Forecast (GLF) is an alphanumeric product providing information on marine conditions such as: wind, waves and significant weather. Information on visibility, icing, and air temperature is provided if the forecaster considers this information to be significant. A Coded Marine Forecast (MAFOR) covering the first 24 hours of the forecast will be appended to the GLF for each lake except Lake St Clair.

The Open Lakes forecast product is prepared by the following National Weather Service (NWS) Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs): WFO Chicago (Lake Michigan), WFO Marquette (Lake Superior), WFO Detroit-Pontiac (Lake Huron and Lake St Clair), WFO Cleveland (Lake Erie), and WFO Buffalo (Lake Ontario). This product is prepared for the Great Lake waters located within the United States. During the portion of the winter season when a Nearshore Forecast (NSH) is not being issued, the Open Lakes Forecast will cover the entire lake.

2. Purpose/Intended Use:

The product is issued routinely at least four times per day, and updated when necessary, to describe forecast conditions including any event-driven marine hazards occurring or expected over the open lake waters for the five day forecast period. This product is intended to provide information assisting in the protection of life and property, and enhancing the nations economy.

3. Audience:

The target audience for the product includes: large shippers, barge and tug boat operators; private maritime organizations; recreational mariners; national, state, and local emergency managers; military and government agencies; media; and the general public.

4. Presentation Format:

The product is made available in alphanumeric format, and is prepared in a consistent manner from all WFOs with open lake forecast responsibilities. Any unique differences in the GLF due to local geography or regional customer requests are described in NWS policy documents made available on the Internet at:

http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/010/operation_services.htm.

5. Feedback Method:

Continuous feedback is available via an Internet page email link to the program managers in the Marine and Coastal Weather Services. Feedback on this product is obtained at Focus Group meetings, from Boat Shows, and Customer Surveys.

Technical and policy questions, and comments for the GLF may be addressed to:

National Weather Service
Attn: Brian LaMarre W/OS21
Marine Program Manager
1325 East-West Highway, Room 13118
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3285
or e-mail questions and comments to: Brian.Lamarre@noaa.gov.

Part 2 - Technical

1. **Format and Science Basis:**

The GLF product is disseminated in alphanumeric format and contains a narrative synopsis, and descriptive phrases for forecast weather conditions for specified temporal intervals out to the day five forecast period. The product describes routine weather elements and hazardous marine events and includes watches, warnings and advisories for significant weather. The product is written in a standard and concise format with all required weather elements.

A MAFOR is a coded version of the first 24 hours of the GLF valid one hour after the issuance of the GLF. The code is adapted from WMO code FM-61-IV and includes groups for wind, waves, and the most significant weather.

Coordination with neighboring WFOs with responsibility for the nearshore waters is done by the issuing office to ensure the products are consistent and compatible.

2. **Availability:**

The product is disseminated routinely four times per day, and is updated on an unscheduled basis as needed. The product is made available via various means of dissemination such as: the Internet, U.S. Coast Guard Radio Broadcasts, the NOAA Weather Radio, and the NOAA Weather Wire. Additional information on Marine and Coastal product dissemination is available at:

<http://weather.gov/om/marine/home.htm>.

The following WWW Internet site is one location to access the GLF product:

<http://weather.gov/om/marine/forecast.htm#bay>.

3. **Additional Information:**

A description of Marine and Coastal Services policy, area of responsibility, abbreviations and definitions, standards and guidelines, and means of product dissemination for the GLF product is described in NWS Instructions 10-301 to 10-304, and also in 10-312 which are made available on the Internet at:

http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/010/operation_services.htm.